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C O N F I D E N T I A L VILNIUS 000857

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/NB AND EUR/ERA

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EU](#) [TU](#) [LH](#)

SUBJECT: GOL CONTINUES TO SUPPORT TURKEY'S EU BID

REF: SECSTATE 150087

Classified By: Political/Economic Officer Alexander Titolo for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Vidmantas Purlys, Head of the MFA's EU Sector Policies Coordination Division, told us August 18 that the GOL shares USG concerns about adding conditions to the negotiating framework ahead of the planned October 3 start of EU accession talks with Turkey. Purlys said that while the GOL is sensitive to the delicate political situation in other EU states regarding Turkey's membership, it believes that the EU should uphold the commitment it made to open talks. He stated that in the GOL's view, Turkey has complied with the conditions necessary to begin accession discussions and that it would be unfair to change the rules at this point. Purlys added, however, that Turkey's membership in the EU is not a certainty; it is possible that the negotiations might fail. Purlys pointed out that most Lithuanians are ambivalent on this issue, but those who do have an opinion are more likely to oppose Turkey's membership than to support it.

12. (C) COMMENT: The GOL supports expansion of the EU as a means of ensuring security and democracy in the region. Lithuania will support Turkey's EU accession process, provided that the Government of Turkey presses ahead with the necessary reforms. However, the membership of nearer neighbors is more important to Lithuania's long-term interests.
Mull